

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested for the following reasons:

1. Rejection of Claims 1-3 and 5 Under 35 USC §102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,164,797 (Crane)

Claims 1 has been amended, and claim 7 has been added, to emphasize that the fluorescent lamps are each supported and electrically connected at one end by a single respective socket, the single sockets in turn being supported by the ballast which is mounted to a fixture (or to the ceiling or a wall), as is clearly shown in each of the figures and described in the original specification of the present application. The fluorescent lamps of Crane are supported and electrically connected in conventional fashion at two ends by two sockets. Unlike the claimed invention, in which a single socket supports a single lamp, Crane requires a pair of sockets for each lamp, the pair of sockets being situated at opposite ends of the lamps.

The Examiner will note that Fig. 3 and other figures of Crane show sockets (“lampholders”) 12, 14, and 16 on each side of the fixture. According to the description, these lampholders are arranged in pairs to support “opposite ends” of the lamps. See col. 2, lines 18-23 of the Crane patent, which describes conventional lampholders that are used in the embodiments of Figs. 3 and 5—see, *e.g.*, col. 3, lines 1-4 of the Crane patent, which refer to “lampholder pairs” 12, 14, and 16. The Crane patent clearly uses conventional lamps and sockets for supporting the lamps at two ends, albeit with simplified ballast wiring.

Because the Crane patent does not disclose support by a socket and electrical connection to a ballast at a single end, the ballast supporting multiple sockets and being mounted to a fixture, the ceiling, or a wall, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC §102(b) is respectfully requested.

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2. Rejection of Claim 6 Under 35 USC §103(a) in view of U.S. Patent Nos. 6,164,797 (Crane) and 6,194,840 (Chang)

This rejection is respectfully traversed on the grounds that the Chang patent, like the Crane patent, fails to disclose or suggest fluorescent lamps are each supported and electrically connected at one end by a single respective socket, the single sockets in turn being supported by the ballast which is mounted to a fixture, the ceiling, or a wall. Instead, the Chang patent is completely silent as to the construction of the socket, its connection to the ballast, and mounting of the ballast. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 6 under 35 USC §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Having thus overcome each of the rejections made in the Official Action, withdrawal of the rejections and expedited passage of the application to issue is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

BACON & THOMAS, PLLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Urcia', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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